

is to enter into with Princess Alix, of Hess-Darmstadt.

Alexander Alexandrovitch, czar and autocrat of all the Russias, was of the imperial house of Romanoff. He was born March 10, or, according to the Russian calendar, February 26, 1845. The death of his brother Nicholas left him czarewitch, heir apparent to the throne of the Russian empire. In 1866 he married the Danish Princess Dagmaret, sister of the Princess of Wales. Their first child, Nicholas Alexandrovich, who will be czar of all the Russias, was born May 12, 1868.

When the nihilists killed Alexander II., in 1881, so severely was the Russian monarchy shaken that no attempt was made to celebrate the coronation of the new emperor, until two years later. But in 1883 Alexander III. was crowned with most splendid ceremonies. There were fetes for days and days through all Russia.

The "White Father" has not passed the 13 years of his reign in peace and quietude. His days were troubled by the different attempts made to efface him from the world of the living. Notwithstanding all the care that was taken to prevent even the slightest mishap the czar came more than once very near meeting his doom.

The most serious attempt to kill him was made in the beginning of April 1887. He was fired at in the park at Gatchina by an officer, but escaped uninjured although the pistol was discharged at close quarters. The would-be assassin was arrested. Personally his majesty was always unaffected by fear, so that the terrorists never attained their object—that of frightening him into accession to their demands by attempts on his life. He was on this subject almost a fatalist. He has said if it were the will of Divine Providence that he should fall the victim of a bullet or a bomb in the hands of one of his own subjects, he must submit: but so long as he lived he would continue to devote his life and work to what he termed the maintenance of the dignity of Russia. The czarina, on the other hand, was always anxious for her husband's safety. March following the attempted assassination, three persons were arrested in the streets of St. Petersburg with explosive machines in their possession, and from them the authorities obtained disclosures respecting the conspiracy. Some of these men were confined in the Schusselburg fortress, while others were placed in the ci adel of St. Petersburg. On this occasion two women—one the wife of a general, the other of a doctor, who were compromised to some extent in the murder of the preceding czar in 1881—were parties to the plot, but they refused to give any information to the police. Traces, however, of the conspiracy were discovered at

Charkoff, Kieff, Warsaw, Moscow, Odesa and Nova Teherkask.

About the same period a military plot was discovered in the Caucasus, and as a result of the discovery over 100 officers were arrested. The chief conspirator in this case was an old officer who had served more than 35 years, and whose breast was covered with decoration. They were all tried by court martial at Tiflis, over which presided Prince Don-dokoff.

Alexander III. saw his own father mutilated and bleeding to death. His own train and carriage were blown to shreds, and as a result his own nerves were no longer of iron. He was many times portrayed as a coward. The impression was a strong one, and the elaborate system of espionage, and the immoral practice of employing agents who sometimes organized the crime which they discovered, contributed to impart consistency to a charge which his creditable career as an officer should amply suffice to refute. Personal courage is one of the most striking characteristics of the Romanoffs, and of moral courage the czar certainly possessed enough for a hero or a martyr.

Alexander III has been a paragon of domestic virtue; no breath of scandal has sullied his renown. But he is an exception among Russian emperors, and his son is not likely to follow in his footsteps in this particular.

Nicholas Alexandrovitch, the present czar of all the Russias, was born in St. Petersburg on the 18th of May, 1868. As an infant he was so tiny and fragile that he seemed to hang to life by the thinnest of threads, and many were the jokes in the imperial family about "the czar's very little heir." As he grew into boyhood it was seen that the young grand duke greatly resembled his mother, the lovely and accomplished Dagmar, sister of the Princess of Wales.

From her he has inherited a joyous nature, quite unlike that of his distrustful and melancholy father. He is small in stature and well made. Like her, he is fond of music and dancing, of society and all that embellishes life and gives it charm.

The liveliness of the Dane is far more conspicuous in his nature than the dreaminess of the Russian.

There is a certain party in Russia which likes to represent Nicholas as a simpleton. Everything that he says or does, except in his love affairs, disproves this. "He speaks seven languages admirably, and thinks in none," said a wicked critic one day. This is unkind. Those who met the czar during his recent visits to France and England, were astonished at the depth as well as the brightness of his observations. When he went to Berlin to represent his father at the funeral of Emperor Wilhelm I., Bismarck dis-

covered that he had at last met a Russian grand duke whom he could not "talk round."

Nicholas is passionately fond of the military profession. Peter the Great and Nicholas I. are his favorite sovereigns. He is to be known as "Nicholas II.," and has studied the career of the great Nicholas with ardor.

His regiment of hussars is said to be the best in the Russian army. He is a skilled swordsman, with a strength of wrist remarkable in one of so delicate frame. He handles a pistol so cleverly that when he was making his tour through the Caucasus he astonished even the tribesmen by his miraculous aim.

"I should like," said Nicholas recently, to an English visitor, "to see Russia arrive at a point where one of her diplomats could do more than all her armies united." To another he said: "My ancestor, Nicholas, was a man of immense force of character. The people trembled before him. I would like to have the same force, and yet to be loved by my people." To an interviewer he said: "Without will, a sovereign is of no consequence. He must surround himself with counsellors, but never allow himself to be led."

Never was a young man in graver need of safe advice than the czar.

His situation is strange and dramatic; his dead father, and brother at death's portal; his brilliant and beloved mother in danger of losing her reason; his second brother and successor on the throne a mere boy of 16, not yet awake to the importance of a career; his official bride hurried thousands of miles to marry him, while he is torn by passion for an humbler beauty; Germany threatening, as she appreciates Russia's embarrassed condition, to step into her shoes in the far East; the alliance with France, to which the czar is, personally, heart and soul committed, to be looked after; the democratic spirit to be counted with at home; the burrowings of the nihilists to be checked; surely are materials for worry, for which even the possession of the Russian crown must seem trifling compensation.

He has mighty opportunities. Will he throw them away, like that irresolute giant, his father? Or will he grapple them to him and become a greater figure in the history of the hundred millions of people in the vast Russian empire?

Grover, the great mugwump, is probably satisfied with the result throughout the country. He has done all in his power to down the democratic party and has succeeded in several of the states.

The next house of representatives is in doubt and it will probably be three or four days before the actual result is known, a majority, however, is claimed by the democratic congressional committee, but it may be possible that the populist will have the balance of power in the house for the two years commencing the first Monday in December 1895.